



**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND, WASHINGTON**

9611 SE 36<sup>th</sup> Street | Mercer Island, WA 98040-3732  
(206) 275-7793 | [www.mercergov.org](http://www.mercergov.org)

DATE: February 4, 2021

TO: City Council

FROM: Rory Westberg, Parks and Recreation Commission Chair

SUBJECT: Recommendation on Aubrey Davis Park Trail Safety Improvement Project Framework

---

On behalf of the Parks and Recreation Commission I am pleased to present our recommendation on the project framework for the Aubrey Davis Park Trail Safety Improvement Project.

The Parks and Recreation Commission commenced review of this matter on January 8, 2020 and discussed this topic over four meetings. We have consulted the adopted [Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan](#) (Master Plan) and received feedback from the community and used that to inform our recommendation.

The recommended project framework, further detailed below, provides general project guidance for trail safety improvements in the section of trail from 60<sup>th</sup> Ave SE to 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE (see attached map) - this is the westernmost portion of Aubrey Davis Park.

We recommend a number of "low-impact" trail improvements consistent with the adopted Master Plan, such as separation of uses, street bypass routes, speed limits, signage, trail markings, and restoration of trail shoulders where needed. In the area near the restroom (adjacent to the Gary Feroglia playfields), we recommend a traffic calming project to address this high congestion area.

This recommendation is based on general concepts only and will need to be further refined as design commences.

We recommend the City Council approve the project framework and authorize staff to submit the revised project framework to the Department of Commerce (for approval by the State Legislature) and to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for approval. Once approved by the respective State agencies we understand staff will proceed to 30% design using the approved project framework as their guide. Upon completion of the 30% design, we strongly recommend the Parks and Recreation Commission be directed to solicit public input on the 30% design and prepare a final recommendation to the City Council.

**Background:**

In early 2019, the City of Mercer Island applied for a \$2.3 million appropriation from the Washington State Legislature to fund trail improvements in Aubrey Davis Park (see the Local Community Project request form attached). The application included a funding request for trail widening and safety improvements and was submitted during the early stages of developing the Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan.

At the end of 2019, the Master Plan was completed. At that time, the City received notification that a \$500,000 Department of Commerce grant had been awarded for the Aubrey Davis Park Trail Improvement Project. The “trail widening” project component was not in alignment with the adopted Master Plan. The Department of Commerce requested the City submit a revised project scope for review and approval by the State legislature and WSDOT.

The City Council directed the City Manager and the Parks and Recreation Commission to develop a scope of work consistent with the policy directives in the Master Plan. The Parks and Recreation Commission engaged with the task and developed very detailed project parameters and a context framework to justify its recommendations. The Commission’s product was renamed the “project framework” to distinguish it from the project scope required for the grant.

The grant resubmittal now requires approval by the City Council, the State Legislature, and WSDOT before work may proceed. Project approval is anticipated in 2021, with design to follow, and construction anticipated in 2022.

**Project Overview:**

A segment of the Mountains to Sound Regional Trail (I-90 trail) crosses the width of Mercer Island through Aubrey Davis Park. It is one of two primary transportation connectors for bicycle traffic from Seattle to the Eastside and is heavily used by runners, pedestrians, and bicyclists. This use is expected to increase due to population growth and improved access to public transportation connections along the trail corridor.

While much of the trail across Mercer Island is relatively flat with good sight lines, the 0.8 mile section of the Mountains to Sound Regional Trail from 60<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE to 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE has several steep grades with limited sight lines that can result in speeds in excess of 20 mph by wheeled trail users. This segment of trail also travels through an urban park setting that contains many recreational facilities, including sports fields, tennis courts, playgrounds, picnic areas and connecting spur trails. Park users on foot cross the trail in multiple locations. The concentration of users in a relatively small area and the hilly nature of the terrain creates a potential for user conflicts. The trail currently does not segregate users, nor does it have notable features that regulate speed or control traffic flow other than limited center striping, bollards, and “keep right” signs.

The Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan, adopted in December 2019, explored high-level trail planning issues such as trail width, bypass routes, and key intersections. The Master Plan, did not, however, include final design recommendations for trail improvement projects. .

**Proposed Project Framework:**

The overarching theme of the Master Plan was to preserve the open space and natural character of the Aubrey Davis Park, which includes limiting or avoiding new impervious surfaces as improvement projects

are contemplated. The goal of the Aubrey Davis Park Trail Safety Improvement Project is to improve safety and create a more enjoyable experience for all trail and park users, while maintaining the existing character of the Park.

We recommend the project framework focus on “low impact” approaches in a coordinated trail plan for the trail section from 60<sup>th</sup> Ave SE to 76<sup>th</sup> Ave SE. We specifically recommend the following **low impact approaches** be included for consideration as part of the project framework and serve as a guide in developing the 30% design:

- Traffic calming measures
- Traffic separation on the trail
- Street bypass routes for high-speed cyclists
- Trail speed limits
- Restore trail shoulders as needed
- Manage existing vegetation along the corridor to avoid encroachment and maintain sightlines
- Barriers to channel cross-trail traffic in targeted areas
- Traffic signage and pavement markings
- Wayfinding and park rules signs
- Public education
- Art and placemaking elements

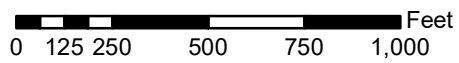
As noted previously, in the area near the restroom (adjacent to the Gary Feroglia playfields), we recommend a traffic calming project to address this high congestion area. This project was identified as one of the highest priorities in the Master Plan (see page 52). We recommend the footprint of the project be limited to the area in front of the restroom (see Master Plan page 40, Option #1) and do not support construction of a trail bypass behind the restroom (see Master Plan page 40, Option #2).

Finally, we recommend the project framework include the removal of bollards and replacement with traffic control measures where needed on all parts of the trail as recommended in the [Master Plan \(see pages 42-44 and Appendix F\)](#).

#### **Next Steps – Public Engagement at 30% Design:**

Once approval of the revised grant application is obtained from the City Council, the State Legislature, and WSDOT, we strongly recommend the Parks and Recreation commission facilitate another public input process to review the 30% design. Given that this recommendation is for the “project framework” only we feel strongly that the community needs an opportunity to review and provide input on the details of the 30% design before the final design is completed. The Parks and Recreation Commission will work with staff to facilitate this process and provide a final recommendation on the 30% design to the City Council.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY  
LEFT BLANK





## 2019 Senate Democratic Caucus

Date Received

Senator Frockt

Budget Staff

Member Requested Local Community Project Information Form

**This request must be submitted to Senator David Frockt by February 15th 2019.**

**Project Name:** I-90 Mercer Island Aubrey Davis Park Multiuse Trail Upgrade

### Physical Location of Project

Address of Project Site: 2030 72nd Ave SE

District: 41

Mercer Island, WA 98040

Legislative Sponsor:

Amount Requested:

\$ 2,300,000.00

### I. Project Contact Information

Name(s): Julie Underwood

Title: City Manager

Organization: City of Mercer Island

Organization's Website: www.mercergov.org

Phone: (206) 275-7660

E-Mail: julie.underwood@mercergov.org

Mailing Address: 9611 SE 36th St  
Mercer Island, WA 98040

### II. Organization Information

(1) Is this organization registered with the state as a non-profit organization? ☐ Y ☒ N

(2) Is there a current or pending 501(c)(3) IRS registration? ☐ Y ☒ N

(3) If answered NO to either of the above, is applicant a local government? ☒ Y ☐ N

### III. Project Description *Please include the phase of the overall project for which funds are requested.*

The existing I-90 Trail (aka Mountains to Sound trail) on Mercer Island was constructed in 1990. It is 10 feet wide with no shoulders. It does not meet any current standards. The Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan is proposing a schematic 14 foot trail cross section with 2 foot shoulders to accommodate current and future use. This project would design a trail that achieves this cross section where feasible. It would construct upgrades on priority sections of the trail to meet Master Plan goals. This would provide trail capacity and usability similar to that of the SR 520 trail, the Eastside Rail Corridor and other current or recent regional trail projects.

#### IV. Project Details

1) What is the Primary Project Objective? (Please check only one.)

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Economic Development      | <input type="radio"/> Health Care         | <input type="radio"/> Environment                                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Social Services           | <input type="radio"/> Historic Facilities | <input type="radio"/> Housing   |
| <input type="radio"/> Education                 | <input type="radio"/> Parks & Recreation  | <input type="radio"/> Other (describe)                                  |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Infrastructure | <input type="radio"/> Arts and Culture    | <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> |

Start Date

Completion Date

2) Eligible Project Type or Phase. (Please check all that apply to this request and insert requested amount.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Land Acquisition	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition and Site Preparation	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Design	\$ 200,000.00
<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Renovation	\$ 2,100,000.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) <div style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 450px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></div>	
Total Request	\$ 2,300,000.00

3) Is this a joint project?

☒ Y ☐ N

If yes, please list the partners:

WSDOT Northwest Region, King County

4) Is the site owned?

☒ Y ☐ N

5) Is it optioned for purchase?

☐ Y ☒ N

6) Is it under a lease of 5 years or more with renewal options that total at least 10 years?

☐ Y ☒ N

7) Has project applied (or will apply) for other sources of state funding?

☒ Y ☐ N

If yes, please provide program and details:

The Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan received a WSDOT Local Programs grant of \$100,000 in 2018.

8) Has the applicant initiated a fundraising campaign?

☐ Y ☒ N

If yes, what percentage of matching funds have been secured?

What other sources of matching funds are available?

What source(s) of non-state funds exist for completion of the project and its ongoing maintenance and operation?

The City is also exploring trail upgrades as part of King County Wastewater Division's North Mercer Sewer Interceptor project. This project will rebuild almost half of the I-90 trail on Mercer Island. The ongoing maintenance of the trail is funded primarily through an agreement between WSDOT and the City of Mercer Island. The City supplements WSDOT reimbursements to provide the current level of service.

## V. Public Benefit

(1) Please describe public benefit of the project.

Implementing current standards on the I-90 trail will provide trail users with a safer and more enjoyable trail experience. It will provide access to a wide range of users including pedestrians, bicycle commuters, recreational cyclists, e-bike users, and non-bike wheeled users. Having a safer, more usable trail for a wide range of users will encourage more people to use this and other regional trails.

(2) Please list the measurable objectives of this benefit:

Trail use will increase.  
Trail use satisfaction will increase.  
Complaints of user conflicts on the trail will decrease.

(3) Please describe the measurement process:

Trail use will be measured by permanent and temporary trail counters.  
Trail user satisfaction will be measured by surveys and interviews with trail user groups.  
Trail user complaints will be tracked in a public engagement database.